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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1023

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 000538

SIPDIS

DEPT OF EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, EAP/RSP, IO/RHS, DRL/MLGA;
NSC FOR E.PHU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/23/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KISL](#) [SOCI](#) [ID](#) [UN](#)

SUBJECT: UN "DEFAMATION OF RELIGION" RESOLUTION -- PRESSING
INDONESIA

REF: STATE 27376

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph L. Novak, reasons 1.4(b+d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: Per reftel instructions, poloff met with Department of Foreign Affairs (DEPLU) contacts and urged that the GOI oppose the "Combating Defamation of Religion" resolution at the UN Human Rights Council. Contacts said the GOI planned to support the resolution, citing purported "Islamophobia" and law-and-order concerns. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) Poloff met on March 23 with Primanto Hendrasmo, Deputy Director of DEPLU's Department of Socio-Cultural Affairs and International Organizations. Drawing on reftel language, poloff provided the rationale for opposing the resolution based on our support for freedom of expression and other human rights. At the same time, poloff underscored our steadfast promotion of religious tolerance and our opposition to the spreading of disrespect toward any religious tradition. He urged that Indonesia oppose the resolution or, at the very least, abstain. Poloff noted that our discussions with the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) had not led to a resolution of key concerns.

¶3. (C) Primanto asserted that a majority of Indonesians endorsed the "defamation" resolution. (Note: This seems unlikely as most Indonesians are not engaged on the matter.) The resolution fell within GOI efforts meant to balance human rights protections while maintaining law-and-order. Indonesia did not consider free speech an absolute right and security considerations could warrant limitations on that right. Poloff stressed that the draft resolution, as written, was not balanced, but was tilted toward limiting free speech and stifling dissent.

¶4. (C) Poloff also met on March 24 with Diana Emilla, head of DEPLU's Department of Civil and Political Rights, to reiterate the U.S. position on the resolution. Emilla said Indonesia would continue to support the OIC resolution. She said the GOI was against "Islamophobia," particularly "in Western European countries." Emilla agreed that the U.S. concerns were important and said Indonesia was a moderating force within the OIC. DEPLU would continue to review the U.S. positions and would make recommendations to counterparts at the UN. Poloff provided Emilla with the U.S. response to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights concerning the defamation of religions resolution as outlined in reftel.

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